

Requesting Accommodations

ACT provides access to the ACT® test through appropriate accommodations based on the examinee's diagnosis and needs. ACT has established policies regarding documentation of an examinee's disability and approves accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

ACT also uses the following guiding principles in responding to requests for accommodations on the ACT:

1. *Fair*: Requirements and procedures for test accommodations must ensure fairness for all examinees, both those seeking accommodations and those testing under standard conditions.
2. *Consistent*: Accommodations must be consistent with ADA requirements and appropriate and reasonable for the documented disability.
3. *Valid*: Accommodations must not result in an undue burden, as that term is used under the ADA, or fundamentally alter that which the test is designed to measure.
4. *Professional*: Documentation of the diagnosis must meet guidelines that are considered to be appropriate by qualified professionals and must provide evidence that the person's impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities. Applicants must also provide information about current and/or prior accommodations made in similar settings, such as in academic classes and other testing situations.

If you currently receive accommodations in school due to a professionally diagnosed and documented disability, the following information will prepare you and guide you through the process of requesting test accommodations.

What Documentation is Needed?

The following information explains what documentation is needed to support the accommodations request.

The ADA defines a disability as a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity compared to the average person in the general population. The guidelines of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th or 5th Edition (DSM-IV or DSM-5), are used to substantiate the presence of a disabling condition.

To qualify for accommodations on the ACT, documentation must show:

1. The condition is professionally diagnosed AND substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Complete diagnostic documentation may be required to substantiate a need for accommodations on the ACT, particularly when accommodations have been recently provided to the examinee. [See Criteria for Diagnostic Documentation](#)

2. Requests for accommodations are appropriate and reasonable for the documented disability.

Typically, accommodations that meet this criteria have previously been provided in an academic setting. To show whether requested accommodations meets the above criteria one or more of these documents must be provided:

- If accommodations have been provided, include the accommodations pages from a current Individual Education Program (IEP), Section 504 plan, or official accommodations plan.
- If no accommodations have been provided, include a detailed explanation of why no accommodations were used in the past and why accommodations are needed at this time.

What is a Disability?

The ADA defines a disability as a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity that the average person in the general population can perform. The guidelines of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th or 5th Edition (DSM-IV or DSM-5), are used to establish the presence of a disabling condition.

Qualified Diagnosticians

The administration of diagnostic assessments, determination of specific diagnoses, and recommendation of appropriate accommodations must be made by a qualified professional whose credentials are appropriate to the disability. The name, title, and professional credentials (e.g., degrees, areas of specialization, license or certification, employment) must be clearly stated in the documentation. For physical disabilities, documentation must be provided by a qualified physician.

Substantiation of Diagnosis

When required, documentation must provide a comprehensive evaluation with objective evidence of an impairment that causes a substantial limitation to a major life activity. The documentation must also indicate how the impairment interferes with the person's ability to take the ACT, and the specific recommendations for test accommodations

required. If evaluative data is required, documentation must include standard scores and/or percentiles, including subtests from reliable, valid, and standardized measures.

When full documentation is required by ACT, the information below is recommended for each condition.

Documentation by Type of Disability

Each request for accommodation is evaluated on a case-by-case basis using appropriate documentation. If a particular element of documentation is not provided, the diagnostician must explain why it is not included in the submission.

The above information may be strengthened by the submission of letters from teachers discussing specific ways in which the condition affects the examinee in the classroom and in testing situations, or submission of completed [Teacher Survey Form \(PDF\)](#)

Learning Disabilities

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Psychiatric Disorders

Visual Impairment

Hearing Impairment

Autism, Asperger's, Pervasive Developmental, or Autism Spectrum Disorders

Speech and Language Disorders

Medical Conditions

Traumatic Brain Injuries